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Thursday, March 24, 2011

Be prepared to be amazed



PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

Ward Simpson, Neil Viola, Ralph Tallman, Mark Edwards, Lou Spagnol, Clive Buiet, Wally Bogusut, chairman John Wiens, Rob Woier and Jill Barber have been fundraising for some of the extras at the community centre and have surpassed their \$450,000 goal. They won't tell us by how much until the official opening Saturday. The doors open at 12:30 p.m. and the ceremony begins inside at 1 p.m.—parking and seating are expected to be at a premium.

Doors open at 12:30 p.m. Saturday and a huge crowd is expected to attend the opening celebrations of the community centre the town has waited a decade for.

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

It's on schedule, on budget, ready for its official opening Saturday—and quite spectacular.

There's been nothing but good news since construction began on the new Anderson Lane community centre in the fall of 2009, and that continues to hold true just days before the public gets its first glimpse of the facility interior.

By mid-week there were a few finishing details to attend to, says Ken Rive, the town's facilities manager, who took on the almost full-time job of overseeing the project during the past year.

The exercise equipment, track and elevator are beckoning to the second floor; the games room is equipped with two beautiful pool tables and dart boards, the card tables are ready to be set up for seniors euchre and the local bridge club, and the lawn bowling artificial turf is all set for the spring opening.

See Page 4

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Board asks for Virgil School artifacts to be part of Crossroads

Bell, weather-vane would help students feel at home in their new school.

Penny Coles
Niagara Advocate

When Crossroads School opens in September, the school board would like students

to see some of the historic elements from the building they left behind incorporated in the new facility.

The board wants to remove some of the artifacts and architectural features from the 1872 original one-room stone building on Four Mile Creek Road "to provide some continuity for the students and to commemorate the long history" of Virgil School.

Students, teachers and parents have said they would like the school bell, which hangs inside the cupola, the weathervane, the tin ceiling which is hid-

den above a suspended ceiling, and the date stone to be part of the new school on Niagara Stone Road.

In January, council asked the town's heritage committee to research the designation of Virgil Public School. That report is in the works, but not expected to be ready for council until May or June, planning director Stephen Bedford said at Monday's council meeting.

A subcommittee of the heritage committee toured the school last month and members have suggested the tin ceiling, bell and weathervane, along with

the older coat hooks and some of the wainscoting, could be removed and reinstalled at Crossroads.

The date stone is a little more difficult—it identifies the stone portion of the building as a school in School Section No. 8 and indicates there has been a school on that site in Virgil for 139 years.

"Such date stones are rare," the heritage committee report says.

The committee recommends that if the date stone can be removed without damage it can be installed at the new school—otherwise a repli-

ca should be designed and used in its place.

"This will ensure that the date stone is conserved no matter what the outcome of the designation process," the report says.

Two councillors voted against referring the heritage committee report to the planning department.

Councillors Martin Mazza and Jamie King said the request was premature—that the board should be asked to wait until the designation process has been completed.

See Page 3

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Request for advice a gesture of goodwill

From Page 2

The board has agreed to abide by the recommendations of the heritage committee, Bedford said, reminding council that the school board still owns the building and doesn't need the town's permission to remove the artifacts.

If the building had already been given a her-

itage designation, the board would likely have applied for a permit to move the items, and the municipal heritage committee's response might have been the same, he said.

"I wish we'd acted sooner to investigate designation," said Mazza, who on his first attempt to introduce a motion to start the process was cut off on a point of pro-

cedure that delayed his motion.

"Now we're sitting here watching things being removed and we're powerless. I'm not happy with this but I don't know what we can do about it."

He suggested asking the school board not to remove any thing until the council has made a decision about designation.

King agreed with Mazza, saying it was premature to be granting the removal of artifacts while the town is still investigating designation.

While he appreciated the good will shown by the school board in asking for advice, King said, "I think we could be offering advice that later could turn out to be wrong."

Councillor Dennis Dick said that even if the building is designated, it will be used for something other than a school, and the items would likely end up being removed anyway.

He suggested "taking the inside

out" of the building might be the way to save those artifacts.

The municipal heritage committee recommendations and council discussion will be incorporated in a planning report on the future of the artifacts and the Virgil school building.



PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

Virgil School's date stone, bell (in the cupola) and weather-vane may be moved to Crossroads.

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From Page 1

The lawn bowlers not only have a great surface—and an expensive one, but that is easy to maintain—they have the wrought iron gate from their historic Regent Street green, to remind them of the club's beginnings, says Rive.

The lounge has comfy chairs just waiting for seniors to sink into. The youth room looks pretty bare—purposefully. The town is planning on consulting with a yet-to-be-established youth committee about what would be appropriate for that room.

And the nursery school room has little cubbies ready for the many pairs of shoes toddlers will store there over the coming years, on their way to growing up in a small town that has an amazing facility for them to enjoy.

The banquet room looks functional but at the same time welcoming and elegant, thanks mostly to designer Wendy Edwards, whose expertise helped meet the challenge of having one

room that could do double duty, hosting aerobic classes and badminton games by day and sophisticated wedding receptions in the evening.

Her finishing touches can be seen throughout the facility, turning what could have been a utilitarian building into a warm, stylish and tasteful space that's also friendly and hospitable.

The multi-purpose banquet room was one of the biggest challenges of the design, says architect John Knox of the Chamberlain Group, which also managed the construction project.

The parquet floor—with subtle sports lines that blend into the design—and the tiling and panels on the walls, instead of the more common concrete block, have helped to "bump it up a notch" for receptions, while still allowing some of the activities that would be expected in a gymnasium, he said.

Also involved in the design of the library and firehall, Knox refers to the Anderson Lane 22-acre

property as a campus. The first two buildings set the standard, he said, and it was important that the community centre fit in without overshadowing the property simply because of its size, while allowing the library to keep its own identity.

The facility, he said, is "a milestone building for the town, a major investment. It was important to get it right. You don't get another chance five years down the road. We worked very hard to get it right, and I think we did."

Having one company do the design and build, with the town overseeing the project, was a good process, Rive says—one he would recommend.

It allowed for appropriate changes to be made on the spot as the work progressed, and if one area went over budget, there would be another that came in under expected costs to balance out.

There were no major setbacks, no unpleasant surprises, no difficulties getting supplies—the work pro-

gressed smoothly throughout, says Rive. Even the weather through the winter of 2009-2010 co-operated as construction got underway.

As the project nears completion, Rive says he has enjoyed the challenge, and the hands-on involvement that has taken him away

from the daily routine of his work with the town.

"It's added a lot of stress, but I've enjoyed watching it all come together. It's exciting—it takes you away from the mundane. There have been lots of decisions that had to be made, some of them under pressure of time,

and you just have to do what seems best at the time and hope they are the right decisions."

Is he nervous about the public reaction Saturday?

"I'm more excited than nervous. I think it's going to be a positive reaction and a great day."



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PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

John Wiens prepares to take a shot on one of two new pool tables in the games room at the new community centre. There are also two dart boards. The colour scheme, including the felt surface of the pool tables, was chosen by designer Wendy Edwards. Those who visit every room at the Saturday opening will have a chance to win a prize in a draw which will be held at the end of the day.

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Don't miss opening ceremonies

The doors to Niagara-on-the-Lake's state-of-the-art community centre, 10 years in the discussion and planning stages, will open to the public Saturday at 12:30 p.m., with opening ceremonies at 1 p.m. sharp, followed by demonstrations, tours and entertainment until 4 p.m.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Clive Buis, director of parks and recreation, says he is expecting a big crowd—there is a huge amount of curiosity and interest to see the unveiling of the facility, which will have cost about \$7 million by the time it's finished, and has been funded with generous donations from the province and the federal government, and a matching amount from the municipality.

In the evening, Lord

Mayor Dave Eke will host a community celebration to thank residents and business owners for their gener-

“**The excitement of what this fabulous event will mean to the community is growing.”**

— Lord Mayor
Dave Eke

ous contributions to the fundraising efforts, and support for the facility.

Running from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., the evening celebration will feature musical entertainment, a special performance

by Shaw Festival Theatre artists, tours, food samplings, a cash bar and special draws.

Admission is free and all NOTI residents are encouraged to join in the festivities.

“As we approach the official opening, the reality is near and the excitement of what this fabulous facility will mean to our community is growing,” said Eke. “I hope that all residents will take this opportunity to see what they helped to build and now own.”

Included in the opening celebrations are the unveiling of the donor wall and the tribute to Harold Clement, a strong advocate for the new facility who passed away without having the opportunity to see the results of his persistence.



PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

Fundraising committee members Ward Simpson and Rob Weier prepare to try out the new track upstairs at the community centre, while the other members cheer them on.

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our editorial

First 100 days of council productive

This week, in his address to council, Lord Mayor Dave Eke spoke of some of the accomplishments of the first 100 days of our new council.

He said he is pleased with the council—both incumbents and newcomers—and with town staff. It has definitely not been, as he promised it would not be, “business as usual” at the town hall.

“If you always do as you always did, you will always get what you always got,” was his explanation.

There has been good news from this council and staff. Town taxes are down 5.5 per cent, with a 2.5 per cent increase for town employees. Staff produced a budget that was not only responsible but easy to understand.

“The way we do business is changing,” said the mayor.

The process outlined by our chief administrative officer for the town dock lease is a good example. We may end up with the same tenants, but the road to that

destination will be quite different—more accountable, finally transparent.

The planning department is trying to overcome a perception of NOTL as a difficult place to do business.

There is help on the horizon for Niagara-on-the-Lake residents with problems created by student rentals, and some nudging of Niagara College to be part of the solution.

Council has agreed to facilitate discussions about Parks Canada's Lakeshore Road property, with a goal of finding a way to open it to the public.

There is money put aside for the 1812 bicentennial celebration committee. And not at taxpayers' expense.

We have town council and staff determined to push the region for inter-municipal transit for NOTL residents.

That's a lot of substance in just 100 days, and bodes well for the future. Kudos to those who have helped to make it happen.

letters to the editor

Dissent in a free society

As one who frequently writes letters to the editor, I do indeed appreciate the freedom of expression we enjoy. I do not however share Ken Morrison's admiration of Stephen Harper and Rob Nicholson nor do I think that joining a political party is the only way to get involved or to voice one's discontent. We are faced with a government which does not restrict freedom of information. It muzzles civil servants and refuses to reveal the true costs of its various policies from prison expansion to the purchase of jet fighters. We have a minister of the Crown who orders a document to be altered

and then denies knowing who made the alteration. The Harper government, as it is now officially called, has spent \$26 million dollars of taxpayers' money on lavish, self-congratulatory television ads which masquerade as information about programs which are old and have run their course. Those who have taken Mr. Morrison's advice and joined one of the opposition parties, are treated to the spectacle of their leaders being attacked viciously in personal ads which have marked a new low in Canadian political discourse. Disgraceful behavior deserves a public airing and it is reassuring that newspaper editors still allow dissent in our free society.

Jim Reynolds

Council shows petty prejudices

Further to the letter from Bill Auchterlonie (Niagara Advance, March 10) - comments with which I fully concur, concerning itself with our council's sustained, personal onslaught and flagrant attempt to embarrass NOTL Councillor Martin Mazza and his family. I find it difficult to reconcile with the fact that these pillars of the community holding themselves out to be shining lights, so much so as to lay claim to a requirement to be far beyond reproach, are the same people who stood by and watched while the DSSB pursued its callous endeavors to close down NDSS, by carefully deflecting attention away from what

has since become evidently clear, was a hidden agenda of self-interest, well-managed and carefully orchestrated deceit.

My question is: why can't this council concentrate its efforts on the real issues at hand, as opposed to the pursuit of personal vendettas and the exploitation of situations which draw into question their real objectives and demonstrate their petty prejudices? Why were the two primary leaders of NOTL government, in the form of the then Lord Mayor and CAO allowed to simply get away with complicity in their decision to not disclose material information concerning the DSSB internal plans for the NDSS site, which had come to their attention (according to Niagara Advance press reports published some four months ago) during

the fight to keep the school from closure last year, but which they decided to keep out of the public domain, through a policy of deliberate non disclosure? (Because quite ludicrously, they were asked out of respect for board director Warren Hoshizaki to keep it to themselves.)

The people of NOTL had a right to know that there was an alternate agenda in play. Why was this not examined with the gusto so prominently exhibited in front of the public eye in the way that the attack and character assassination on the Mazza family has been orchestrated? Why have these people not been held to account?

Would this not be a better and more tasteful use of time? It appears to me that there is a major hypocrisy in play here and that the vendetta

against Councillor Mazza and his family is very much personally driven.

David B. Green

First-class team in NOTL

Excellent Advance this week...lots of good news. Gary Burroughs has certainly earned the title of NOTL citizen of the year. The front page photo shows that NOTL has a winning team with our Lord Mayor, David Eke, our esteemed MP, Rob Nicholson and our newly crowned Citizen of the Year, Gary Burroughs. The NOTL celebration of the War of 1812 will be first class with their leadership.

E.R.Hardison

Community Centre update



Chris Bowron of NOTL Realty gives a cheque to John Wiens, chair of the new community centre fundraising committee. The committee has gone over the top of its \$450,000 goal but to find out how much has been raised, don't miss the official opening Saturday. Doors open at 12:30 p.m., with a 1 p.m. start for the ceremony.

letter to the editor



NOTL tree feller caught on camera

Last year we saw a couple of trees disappearing along the fence between the marina and Nelson Park.

This winter all but a couple of small trees and

shrubs are gone and even some of the adjoining King's Point condominiums have disappeared.

I caught the suspect on film as he came ashore at Ryerson Park at the foot of Shakespeare.

Iain Barnie

Is there room for excitement in your life?

➤ Buying a new car is not all that different from going to church.

My old car has had it. After nearly 14 years and more than 282,000 kilometres together, it was finally time to part company—a decision I made reluctantly.

I was surprised by the excitement the new car generated in those around me. My husband was thrilled to shop for a new one, but that's a guy thing. However, my friends also were excited -



Barb McGale
St. Andrew's Presbyterian
Consider This

maybe for me, maybe about the car itself.

I couldn't help but notice the similarity between the excitement surrounding that new car and the feeling in the

church. Maybe that surprises you.

Perhaps you think of the church as a place where everyone is dour, sedate, maybe even bored. Perhaps you consider the church to be an institution filled with rules and prohibitions, determined to spoil one's fun.

What I have found in the church is a group of people filled with enthusiasm and excitement.

Not because of that "new car smell" but because of a connection with Christ. There is a sense of celebration because of what God is doing in people's lives, a desire to spend more time with the

Lord and each other, an understanding that praying for one another is a powerful gift.

When I see the children racing up to the front for the children's time in the worship service, I see a tangible expression of the energy that exists among Christians as they gather together. As someone recently said to me, "The church is a place of great joy and peace."

If you can find a place in your heart for joy, peace and love, then try out your neighbourhood congregation. If you have room for a little extra excitement in your life, we have room for you.

Sermon material can be hard to find, but plagiarism is frowned upon

➤ Former St. Mark's preacher of giving published sermons as his own.



Archives Committee
Reports
St. Mark's Church

Every student knows that in the preparation of a paper, if you quote an author and acknowledge the quotation with a foot note reference, you have shown some good research.

If, however, you quote without acknowledging that it is another person's work, you are guilty of plagiarizing. That is considered to be a kind of literary theft.

Preachers are expected to prepare at least one sermon every Sunday. The homily must be interesting, inspirational and thought provoking. Their

problem is where they are to find such material on a regular basis.

They will find some direction through the prescribed Scripture readings for the day. They might find inspiration through conversation with their parishioners. They are expected to read widely in both theological and popular material. There are books that provide suggested sermon outlines that can assist them.

Today there are even sermon topics outlined on an internet site.

But when the well runs dry, there may be the temptation to preach someone else's published sermon.

The library that Robert Addison brought with him from Britain in the eighteenth century contains a number of books of sermons such as "a sermon preached February 10th 1677" or "a sermon preached at the funeral of the Lady Elizabeth Alston."

These were intended as proper reading material for a clergyman living in early Ontario where he had little or no opportunity of hearing another inspirational speaker.

In the margin of one of the volumes of sermons, a rector of St. Mark's, 100 years after Addison, con-

fessed in writing that he had preached two of the sermons from that book. He had to cut them down, because people of his generation did not want to sit and listen to a sermon of such length.

He had to modify the 200-year-old sermon somewhat to suit the language and interests of a later generation. But he confessed to having preached someone else's sermons taken from that book.

He confessed his plagiarism in the margin of the work from which he quoted. He may have included his transgression in his general confession. It is doubtful, however, if he confessed it to the congregation that was sitting listening to him preach.

Hopefully they found the sermon thought provoking and inspirational.



Kim Craiton MPP

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Councillor concerned about potential problems with dock proposals

The last time the town asked for bids to provide a service, it was threatened with a law suit.

Penny Coles
Niagara Advocate

Before voting to approve a report dealing with the town-owned Melville Dock lease, Councillor Martin Mazza congratulated the

town's top administrator for taking a step toward a process Mazza thinks should have been adopted years ago.

Councillors accepted a recommendation from chief administrator Mike Galloway Monday to tell the

“It will be an open and transparent process.”

— Chief administrative officer Mike Galloway

Whirpool Jet Boat operation the town does not wish to continue its Melville Street dock lease agreement

when it expires two years from now.

The town will instead begin the process of requesting proposals or expressions of interest from businesses that might like to lease the town dock, including the jet boat company.

Over the past decade, the lease to the popular but noisy jet boat operation has created dissension between the town and residents, some who live near the dock and are bothered by the boats and others who just don't feel the attraction is a good fit for Niagara-on-the-

Lake or the Niagara River.

Lake now is now obligated to notify the jet boat operator by April that it does not wish to renew the lease in 2013, but the company can still be part of the process with an expression of interest.

“I'm happy with the report,” said Mazza.

“I like the idea of requests for proposals or expressions of interest. I'm glad we're using that process.”

However, he reminded council, the last time the town put out a request for bids, at that time to operate a shuttle in the business district, it created a public battle between two opposing companies charging the town had not handled the request properly.

“That got the town in hot water, and there was the threat of a law suit,” said Mazza, asking Galloway if the town has since developed a policy that would eliminate the flaws in the process.

While there has been no work on a policy, Galloway said, the request will come to council before being put out to the public.

“It will be fairly wide open for discussion.”

He suggested that there will likely be a committee to review the responses, with at least two members of council participating.

“It will be an open and transparent process that will allow us to get this done quickly.”

Lord Mayor Dave Eke said he recently toured the jet boat facility in the Virgil business park, and had a brief discussion with president John Kinney at the time about the lease process and the fact that it might include a request for expressions of interest and proposals.

Kinney said he would be happy to be part of that process, Eke reported.

Councillor Dennis Dick suggested that an expression of interest be broadcast before the town goes to the time and expense of formulating the more detailed request for proposals.

“That way, he said, if there is only interest from the park,” we can negotiate with that one person rather than spend hours of staff time on an RFP.”

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ATTENTION CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

The Shaw Festival is now accepting applications from Niagara-on-the-Lake charitable and/or not-for-profit organizations for a share of the funds raised from the Town Previews. Please send us an outline of the project and budget, along with your request for a specific amount of money.

Applications should be sent to: Colleen Blake, Executive Director
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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13TH, 2011

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All tenders must be accompanied by a certified cheque in the amount of \$40,000.00 made payable to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, and an Agreement to Bond.

Plans and specifications may be viewed without charge but not removed from the following locations:

Niagara Construction Association
 34 Scott Street
 St. Catharines, Ontario
 (members only)

Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
 Department of Public Works
 3 Lorraine Street
 Virgil, ON L0S 1T0

Council agrees to form task force for Niagara-on-the-Green issues

It will look at solving problems created by students.

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

The town not only plans to form a task force to deal with student issues in Niagara-on-the-Green, it has agreed to go one step further—it will with-

hold money destined for Niagara College until it is satisfied the problems have been dealt with.

Council voted Monday to form a committee made up of representatives from Niagara College, NOTG residents, town bylaw enforcement staff, Niagara Regional Police, two councillors and members of town staff. Planning staff has been directed to prepare a bylaw enforcement strategy, with

recommendations to be vetted through the task force. For its part, Niagara College will be asked to establish a code of student conduct for off-campus housing.

The code, council said, should encourage "positive community behaviour" for students and provide "discipline avenues" to be managed by the college.

Niagara-on-the-Green residents

came to council in full force about a month ago to talk about the negative impact student housing has had on their neighbourhood, for some residents turning what was meant to be their dream home into a nightmare.

They told councillors there is not enough parking for the extra cars, the students race

along the roads, endangering children, they hold late night parties and play their music too loud.

As an incentive to draw Niagara College into the solution to the residents' troubles, council decided that payments of \$20,000 to the college, in the budget for the next five years, be withheld,

to be spent on mitigating some of the problems in the neighbourhood.

The motion to form the task force was crafted by Councillor Maria Bau-Coote, who could not be at council Monday, and put forward by Councillor Jamie King.

See Page 10



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Leave lane alone, council told by Queenston residents

Planning staff asked to come up with an alternative to making Dee Road a thoroughfare.

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Pave Dee Road? Queenston residents would rather see it left as it is, a charming and historic

country lane.

In fact, calling it a road is a misnomer, council heard Monday—Queenston residents would like to see it renamed Hamilton Lane in honour of the Hamilton family who once owned the historic Willowbank Estate on Dee Road.

Last September council requested public works staff arrange a meeting with Queenston residents to talk about improvements to the laneway that runs alongside Willowbank from the Niagara River Parkway and down the hill to Queenston

Street. The meeting was held last month.

Jonathan Fast owns an undeveloped parcel of land on the south side of the road, and has been told that the improvements are a necessary result if he wants to build a house.

Fast has said he is concerned with the extent of the work required, and several Queenston residents share his concern.

There are currently four properties accessed by Dee Road—Willowbank on the north and three homes on the south side. One, the his-

toric home of Jonathan Kormos, is accessible from Queenston Street.

Kormos was at the council meeting to explain the significant heritage of the property—his home was built in 1908—and the seldom-used road.

He asked that the road not be widened or lighted, and that the foliage over top remain.

Town staff have suggested the road be surfaced with tar and chip, and that making it a one-way street would limit traffic.

But there was "clearly

considerable opposition to any disturbance of the roadway as it presently exists," says public works director Ewald Kuczerka in his report on the meeting.

Jim Armstrong, president of the Queenston Residents Association, was at council on behalf of the members to ask that the lane be left as is.

While the community would welcome a new resident with open arms, he said, they don't want one of the last and best examples of a country lane in Ontario paved.

It should be preserved as a significant piece of heritage, not improved so that it can be used as a thoroughfare from the Parkway to Queenston Street, he said.

He also suggested the town consider renaming it Hamilton Lane. Town staff was asked to work with residents on an alternate plan that would allow access to the new home on Dee Road without paving it, and to consider the name change to honour the Hamilton family history.

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\$20,000 a year could be withheld

From Page 9

Councillor Gary Zalepa followed up with the request to withhold the annual \$20,000 pending discussions with the task force, to be eventually forwarded to the college at the discretion of council.

Town administrator Mike Galloway suggested the \$20,000

could continue to be allocated in the budget, but "we withhold the cheque until council is satisfied with the direction of the discussions with 'Niagara College'."

Councillor Martin Mazza said he was happy with the decision to form a task force that would work to solve some of the issues caused by student tenants.

"We owe it to the residents of

Niagara-on-the-Green to show them we want to do as much as we can."

The \$20,000 could pay for part-time bylaw officers, or could be used to look at providing extra parking. "We're taking it away from the college but spending it because of the college, on issues we wouldn't have to deal with if it wasn't there," said Mazza.

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Shaw Festival launches 50th season with open house Sunday

See the evolution of the Shaw through video retrospect.

Kicking off a season of celebration, the Shaw Festival warmly opens its doors and throws extends an invitation to its Niagara friends and neighbours to come by for a visit during its open house Sunday.

As a way of thanking surrounding communities for the invaluable support received over the past 50 seasons, the Shaw is offering visitors the chance to peek behind the curtain on free behind-the-scenes tours.

Guests will also see the evolution of the Shaw Festival through a costume, video and photography retrospect.

Light refreshments, along with a celebratory cake, will be served.

Visitors will also receive free same day admission to the Niagara Historical Society Museum's Shaw



Brian Doherty

Festival exhibit.

Inspired by lawyer and playwright Brian Doherty's love of theatre and culture, the Shaw Festival has grown from an eight-performance summer festival at the Court House Theatre in 1962 to one that now features 10 to 12 stunning productions yearly in four theatres with an annual operating budget of more than \$26 million.

From its humble beginnings, the Shaw Festival has grown to become a

major Canadian cultural icon.

The Shaw Festival's landmark season begins April 7 and runs until Oct. 30.

It features productions of *Candida*, which was performed that first summer season, *My Fair Lady* and *Heartbreak House*.

Also on stage for the 50th season: *Drama in Irish* - A Comedy, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Admirable Crichton*, *On the Rocks*, *Maria Severa*, *The*

President,

Topdog/Underdog and *When the Rain Stops Falling*.

The festival will also offer a special two-day event, *The Speed of Ideas* - A Theatrical Forum with award-winning playwrights Tony Kushner and Suzan-Lori Parks and author and renowned theatre critic Michael Billington.

The open house is at the Festival Theatre Sunday, March 27, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Festival Theatre.



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Local couple win Ontario's young farmer of the year award

New technology in an industry steeped in tradition helped earn the award.

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

A Niagara-on-the-Lake couple have been named Ontario's outstanding young farmers of the year, chosen from a group of six provincial finalists that exemplify and demonstrate innovation and progress in agriculture.

Wes and Briar Wiens, nominated by the Grape Growers of Ontario, attended an awards ceremony held in Ajax recently, where each finalist gave a presentation about their business to the judging committee and about 200 people at the event.

Wiens says he was proud to be nominated for the award—and winning it was a huge honour.

He grew up working in his grandfather's NOTL vineyards, then alongside his father and uncle. He has done everything from hoeing weeds to helping with the grape harvest, he says. Now he has gone back to the beginning of the grape cycle, grafting and selling grape vines to growers across the country.

About eight years ago he and his wife decided to buy an existing operation, Gemmrich Nursery on Line 5. The previous owner, Martin Gemmrich, stayed on as a mentor for a couple of years, but since then, Wiens has applied his knowledge of modern technology to an industry steeped in tradition.

It's his industry-leading innovations that helped win the award.

"Any business owner that is going to have success has to look at all the tools at your disposal and apply them to their industry. One of those tools is new technology," says Wiens.

The last eight years have been quite a journey, he says, beginning with learning the business. Keeping up with changing government regulations came next, and then the Ontario market took a bit of a nose dive—not just in agriculture but in most industries. That forced him to focus on out-of-province sales, which gave him an opportunity to attract new markets, first in BC, now in the eastern provinces, and to increase his market share to about 60 per cent—all the while using research and technology at their Line 5 nursery to raise the quality of the product.

And it has worked—the nursery grafted more than 1.4 million vines last year,

almost doubling the number from 800,000 in 2006.

They also provide services such as potted vines, custom grafting and brokering imported vines.

Wes, 34, and Briar, 33, are proud parents of four aged from just 15 months to eight years old, so Briar's role is of necessity mostly one of support. But although she may not have much free time to spend at the nursery, "we're in this together, whether she's here everyday or not," says Wes.

There is some travelling involved to more established wine regions around the world in the name of research, and fortunately they are able to do most of that together, he says.

Wes and Briar will represent Ontario at the National competition being held in Brandon, Manitoba where they will compete for the title of Canada's Outstanding Young Farmer.



PENNY COLES Niagara Advance

Wes and Briar Wiens will travel to Brandon, Manitoba to compete for the title of Canada's outstanding young farmers.

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Five Rows in St. Davids earns recognition from peers

Three-person family operation is making award-winning wines.

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

A small St. Davids winery, where the winemaker does everything from pruning grapes to slapping labels on bottles to selling them from the

family barn, can now boast of two Cuvee award-winning vintages.

Howard and Wilma Lowrey run the grape-growing operation, and Wilma looks after the marketing and book-keeping.

But it's due to their son Wesley that they have Five Rows Craft Wine, never mind the two Cuvee awards.

Wes, at 35 the fifth generation to work in the Lowrey vineyards—hence the name Five Rows—is the winemaker. In the summer of 2001, after working for Creekside

Estate Winery, he decided that it was time he made his own wine from the 35-acre vineyard on the family farm, one of the first in Ontario to be planted in grapes.

Wes, who writes a blog describing his work as a rookie winemaker trying to make small quantities of spectacular wine, recalls the day of Cuvee as one that will live forever in Five Rows lore—the day their hand-painted little roadside sign that directs visitors to the Lowrey barn disappeared.

See Page 17



JEFF BAKER Niagara Community Foundation
Rick Knapp presents a first place award to St. Davids winemaker Wes Lowrey at the recent Cuvee competition.



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289-296-9036

Sunday, March 27
10:00am: Coffee Time • 10:30am: Worship Service
(Children's Program)
Message: Joshua: Telephonic Pursuit - Part 5
Greg Alderton, Pastor • www.villageofniagara.ca

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www.niagarachristianassembly.ca check here for events and podcasts.

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Sunday, March 27th
9:30am: 1st Service (nursery care provided extra service)
• 10:30am: Coffee Time
• 11:00am: 2nd Service

(nursery care provided mid-way through service)
Message by: Kevin Bayne, Pastor

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Message by Dr. Alfred Fast
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Small winery building a loyal following of restaurants, customers

From Page 16

The day had an interesting twist in store, he says—before it was over, the little winery would have two Cuvée wins, a first place for best pinot gris, and second in the sauvignon blanc category.

First place sauvignon blanc went to Creekside, another Niagara winery that uses Lourey grapes.

But still no sign to direct wine lovers to the award-winning winery that operates out of a rustic barn on Tanbark Road in St. Davids.

As long-time Niagara grape growers, Cuvée has always held a special place in our heart," said Wesley in his blog.

"In past years when our friends at Creekside won awards for wines featuring our grapes, it always felt neat to know we played a small role. To win this year with wines that I crafted from our own fruit is a completely different feeling that I'm frankly having a hard time getting my head around."

Wilma says the win was received with excitement.

"It's huge for us to win two

awards, so huge for such a small winery. We're just over the moon."

The winery is gradually building a very loyal following, and has no difficulty selling all it can produce.

Treadwell's and Stone Road Grill are just two of the local restaurants that contacted the Lowreys and asked to feature their wines. Five Rows followers have grown, based on word of mouth, and that has created the need for a bit of a balancing act, says Wilma.

While they would love for the world to know of their winery, especially after the two awards earned at a prestigious event, they don't want to create expectations they can't meet.

At the moment, they have very little left of last

year's product to sell.

But when the winery re-opens in May—during the winter it is by appointment, from May to



It's huge for us to win two awards, so huge for such a small winery. We're just over the moon."

— Wilma Lourey,
Five Rows Craft Wine
of Lourey Vineyards

December on weekends only—they will have 500 bottles from their 2010 grapes that they would

love to share.

"I don't want to sound like I'm trying to dissuade people from coming," says Wilma.

"When we're open we love to have people pop in. At this time of year we have to be realistic about what we can provide, but by the time we've finished bottling in April we'll have our 500 bottles again."

They will be bottling pinot gris, sauvignon blanc, cabernet sauvignon, pinot noir, riesling and shiraz.

Wilma says the best part of operating a family business, to her, is enjoying her son's involvement every step of the way, from his hands-on work in the vineyards through the wine-making process to watching appreciative customers walk out of the retail barn, happy to have

a Five Rows bottle in hand.

To understand his affinity to the grapes and the land that produces them, read Wesley's blog about the riesling vines, planted at the urging of his mother-in-law. Despite being planted during a particularly dry season, the vines flourished, but his mother-in-law lost her battle with cancer before she could sample the results of the grapes she had

encouraged him to plant.

His blog tells the story of a winemaker with a passion for his craft, an affinity with the land and an appreciation of the family history that has brought him to this point.

Now, if they could only have a sign to point the way to their winery—although with two Cuvée awards attesting to the quality of Five Rows wines, it seems likely people will find their way.



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Young St. Mike students learning balancing, gymnastic skills

Students will question famous environmentalist on webcast.



**St. Michael
Catholic School
In the Classroom**

Katherine Li and
Emily VanderLaar
St. Michael School

With spring, hopefully, on its way in our students at St. Michael's have been undertaking activities to take our minds off the cold and wet.

Our JK and SK classes have been travelling to Gymnastics Energy, in St. Catharines, for three morning sessions.

See Page 19



Brodie Storin and Matthew Li enjoy the ropes on the JK and SK gymnastics trip.

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Students are looking forward to participating in David Suzuki webcast next week

From Page 18

The students learned stretching and gymnastic techniques, they got to work out on the mats, balance the beam, and the everyone's favourite, jump in the foam pit. A fantastic effort was put in by these students to succeed at the skills required at each activity.

On March 1, our school again took part in World Math Day.

This is a 24-hour period where schools and students from around to world compete against each other, via the internet. Students play other students from countries all over. They have 60 seconds to answer as many math questions as possible.

Points are tallied and the students receive participation certificates. For students with exceptional scoring on all five levels, in their grade category, a Platinum certificate is received.

Our Grade 6 class and our Grade 6/7 class both received 10 platinum certificates. Congratulations to all students Grades 3 to 6 for their participation in this exciting and educational opportunity.

Congratulations also goes out to our speech winners.

Kelly Neuroth (Grade 6/7) and Stanley Elliott (Grade 5) proceeded on to represent our school at the OECCA Speak Out. Kelly placed second at OECCA in the Intermediate category.

Our second place winners, Haleigh Cumisky (Grade 6/7) and Aidan Buis (Grade 6) represented our school at the Legion competition. Haleigh placed first in the Grade 7-9 category.

The week leading up to March Break marked the beginning of our Lenten celebrations. On Shrove Tuesday many parent volunteers treated all our students to a traditional pancake feast. Thank you to all those who volunteered to make this happen for us.

On Ash Wednesday, Father Mitchell visited our school to bless the ashes. The Grade 5 class did a beautiful job representing our Ash Wednesday service for the entire school and parent community.

We also have begun to pray the Stations of the Cross, and each Friday we will take a moment to reflect on all the positives we have in our lives.

The chess teams are up and playing, with many eager

junior and intermediate students playing matches at recesses and lunch. Our junior girls and boys basketball teams are also practising for their upcoming February games and April tournament.

This weekend, March 25 to 27 is the Niagara Regional Science and Engineering Fair held at Niagara College in Welland. We have six Grade 5 students and six Grade 7 students who will be competing. Coming up March 30 David Suzuki will be hosting a webcast, celebrating his 75th birthday.

We will be one of 100 schools participating and we are eager to hear the answers to our questions we sent in. Suzuki will be answering questions submitted by students from the various schools.

Our Grade 6 and Grade 8 students have been working on their Heritage Fair projects. We will be holding our Heritage Fair on April 6 at our school. Project topics range from family accounts of

immigrating to Canada or fighting in a World War to Canada's top inventors, musicians, and more.

In technology news, our Grade 8 class and the intermediate chess team have been piloting the iPad program.



Grace Healy and Anessa Raso, both in JK, are very proud of their snowman projects. Students were asked to create a snowman out of their own choice of materials.

gram. This opportunity is invaluable to the learning within our classrooms.

The Grade 3 classes were off this Monday March 21 to the Children's Museum. The science unit they are studying

is the Structures Unit. Our Grade 3s were involved in interactive and building activities. They were challenged to build a variety of bridges, mini houses, and Inukshuks.

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Sports

Editor Penny Coles

905-468-3283 ext. 103 editor@niagaraadvance.com

NOTL Roadrunners race first 5-km event

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

A local group of runners have organized and run their first race through Niagara-on-the-Lake, hoping to stage similar regular events.

The NOTL Roadrunners, a group of about 20 who run every Wednesday evening, organized their first race last Thursday, led by Joy Janzen.

The runners, a dedicated group who run

throughout the winter, decided their first race would be a St. Patrick's Day five-kilometre run from Simcoe Park, through Fort George to the Niagara River Parkway and back to the park. There was also a 2.5-kilometre course for the kids. The event brought out 15 adults and three kids.

The next race will be held Sunday, April 24, likely beginning again from Simcoe Park. For information about the club or their races call Janzen at 905-468-0746.



The NOTL Roadrunners ran a St. Patrick's Day race, their first as a group, from Simcoe Park.

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Kiemele player of game in Firefighters playoff win

➤ Firefighters also take third place in local March Break tournament.

offence to Alicia Juras and Tyler Cullen while Ryan Heaven, Ewan Fenwick and Macgregor Armstrong played solid defence.

Cameron Kiemele was the player of the game for the Firefighters' second playoff win, making several incredible saves in net claiming a nice shutout.

In the recent March Break tournament in Virgil, the St. Davids Firefighters advanced to the semifinals for a tough battle.

The Firefighter's starting off with a loss to Grimsby at the first game, however they came back strong with a 11-0 win with Ward, Cullen and Austin Gould.

Nice single goals were

collected by Heaven and Lavoie, with outstanding defence and several assists by Gula, Ward, Schultz and Armstrong played incredible hockey for the Wolves.

The next morning the Firefighters continued with another strong 8-0 win against Durham which allowed them to advance to the semifinals against Lefroy. This game was a classic hard core battle for the advancement to the finals.

Both teams fought hard with the score first 1-1, next 2-2 and with only 1:15 left on the clock in the game Lefroy scored, making a 3-2 tough loss for the novice Wolves with a third place finish overall in their division.

Glauser scores hat trick in tough loss

Saturday afternoon the atom house league Wolves of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Minor Hockey Association hosted Lincoln to a tough battle in a final playoff game.

The Meridian Credit Union's Colby Ostromecki opened up the scoring early

In the game with a nice goal assisted by Brennan Dykstra.

Taylor Glauser continued the scoring for the Niagara atoms, assisted by Justice Ball and Matt Vandelaar.

The Lincoln team matched the score board shortly afterwards while

Taylor Glauser added two more nice goals assisted by Brock Gula and Braeden Fleguth.

Gabe Murray and Colin Pederson played solid defence with Austyn Wersthor standing strong in net for a tough final loss of 5-4 for the Credit Union.

Novice Select Wolves lose 4-2 to Oakville

➤ Michael Ward scores two goals in tough but exciting battle.

and Jumbo TV screen going the fans enjoyed a great game.

Oakville started off strong with a goal late in the first period while Michael Ward got a beautiful goal shortly after assisted by Tyler Cullen and Joel Gula.

Oakville fought hard getting a few more goals while Michael Ward again claimed one more nice goal assisted by Ethan Lett.

All players both offence and defence played a great game with a tough final loss of 4-2 final score.

Hunter Ostromecki stood tall behind the pipes making several beautiful saves for the Wolves. After the game the kids and parents enjoyed watching the St. Mike's Major's play against the London Nights as a treat to a great evening of hockey.

On Sunday afternoon the St. David's Firefighters novice house league team of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Minor Hockey Association traveled to Pelham for their second playoff game, coming home with a 1-0 win.

The game was scoreless, back and forth until late in the second period when Michael Ward got an outstanding goal in the top left corner of the net, assisted by Joel Gula.

The Firefighters took several shots on net and kept the play in the Pelham zone. Cameron Schultz, Evan Burland, Noah Andrusiw and Noah Lavoie played outstanding support



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NOTL teen enjoying success on international tennis courts

Love of the sport, competitive streak motivates 14-year-old.

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

A Niagara-on-the-Lake teen tennis champ has some big events ahead of her, and a loyal home-town following rooting for her success.

Charlotte Petrick, a 14-year-old Parliament Oak eighth grader, is the top-ranked female tennis player in Ontario and second in Canada in her age group. She recently returned from an incredible first-place finish in a Guatemalan tournament, open to players under 18 from around the world, earning her international ranking points.

Gaining off that success, she won her first provincial title in the under-16 age

group, held last weekend in Mississauga. Up next are the under-16 nationals in Montreal and then the under-14 nationals in Vancouver.

But even at her young age, she is looking ahead to working her way up in world rankings, and along the way, hoping to qualify for the junior world tournaments coming up in Mexico and the Czech Republic.

Petrick, a strong academic student, trains at White Oaks with Richard Cooper and her parents, Colleen and Frank, both coaches. She is accustomed to spending six months each year in Florida, where she trained each winter from the age of seven.

Her life has changed recently, she says for the better, although balancing all the demands on her time is a real juggling act.

Her parents had been home-schooling Charlotte and her younger brother,

but when they moved to Niagara-on-the-Lake from Oakville, they decided to try Parliament Oak—the school her dad, a NOTL native, attended as a child.

She loves it—her parents were much more demanding as teachers, she says—and she has made some new friends.

But there isn't much time for a social life when you are training three to four hours a day and spending most weekends at tournaments.

She only attends school for half a day to allow for afternoons at White Oaks, and she still goes to bed earlier than kids much younger than her, she says.

But she wouldn't give it up for anything. She feels incredibly fortunate, and appreciative of her parents, that she is able to follow her dream.

"A lot of kids don't get that opportunity," she says.

Her earliest memories involve tennis racquets.

Her parents met, courted and married on a tennis court, and when Charlotte was born, she spent hours comfortably snoozing in a stroller while they played.

She thinks she was two or three when she and her mom started hitting balls in the living room, using the couch as a net, and she hasn't looked back.

She loves the competition, she loves the friends she meets and the friends she makes, the views of incredible landscapes from hotel windows in places like Guatemala, and she thrives on the success she has earned.

"My parents always gave me the option to have a social life," she says.

"I chose the competitive option. I've worked really hard to get where I am. I would probably still keep at it even without the success I've had, but for sure it helps me to know I've made the right decision."



Charlotte Petrick makes her way to the court at a recent tournament in Florida.

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Virgil Women's Institute, Virgil Avenue,
\$3.50 includes dessert. All Welcome!



Tossed salad - Italian bread - Assorted Pies

Coming Events



ON THE LAKE

NIAGARA-on-the-Lake Conservancy AGM

SPEAKER: Lord Mayor, Dave Eke
COUNCILLORS: Maria Bau-Coote & Jamie King
Topic: Protecting the Town's Heritage
Info: Judy MacLaughlin 905-488-3443

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Coming Events

A940
NIAGARA-on-the-Lake Conservancy AGM

Sunday, March 27 + 2:00 pm
St. Mark's Anglican Church Hall

SPEAKER: Lord Mayor, Dave Eke
COUNCILLORS: Maria Bau-Coote & Jamie King
Topic: Protecting the Town's Heritage
Info: Judy MacLaughlin 905-488-3443

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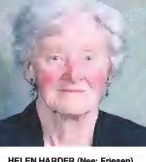
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Deaths

HELEN HARDER (Nee: Friesen)
 April 18, 1916 - March 20, 2011



Peacefully, with her son at her side, Helen Harder passed away on March 20, 2011 at Bathania Personal Care Home. She was predeceased by her parents Gerhard & Maria Friesen, husband Peter, sisters Ann Meadowell (London, Ont.), Mary Friesen (Peterborough, Ont.) and Freda Stewart (Winnipeg). Also brothers and sisters-in-law: Abe and Helen Harder, Jake and Helen Harder, George and Mary Harder, Herb (Marie) Harder and Bill (Frieda) Stewart. She is survived by: son Robert, sister-in-law Mary Harder (London, Ont.); brother and sister-in-law John and Lucy Harder (Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.) and brother-in-law Don Meadowell (London, Ont.) and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mom worked for Eaton's Food Services (Valley Room) for 28 years, retiring in 1981. She loved meeting and chatting with her many customers and acquaintances. She enjoyed the outdoors and always maintained a large vegetable garden, as well as flowers around the yard, until she was no longer able to do so. Special thanks go to the staff at Bathania Personal Care Home (Center Station) for the kind and compassionate care mom received throughout her stay and especially during her final days. Cremation will take place. A private family memorial service will be held.

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In memoriam



ZACHARY ANTIDORMI
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Midget Wolves win provincial title in three-game sweep

NOTL Lions roll over Lindsay Muskies to claim OMHA title on home ice.

The hockey season came to a fitting end Saturday night for the Niagara-on-the-Lake Lions midgets as they earned the title of provincial champions in front of a large, loud and supportive home crowd at the Meridian Credit Union.

The first of the three-game series was played in Lindsay during March Break, with the Lions down five skaters. Two more were lost during the first shift of the game, but centre Jordan van Egmond started the scoring in the second period for a 1-0 lead.

Johnny Neudorf added an insurance marker in the third for a 2-0 win, with Ryan Wagner earning the shutout.



The midget Wolves, sponsored by the NOTL Lions Club, capped off a stellar season with a provincial win on home ice Saturday.

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With everyone back except one for last Friday's game, again in Lindsay, the Wolves scored three times in the first three shifts on their first three shots of the game, ending with a 4-1 victory and setting the stage for the sweep at home.

Van Egmond, Luke Petrie and Shane Wall scored in the first and DeBon added a power play marker later in the game. MacKenzie King was sharp in net.

Saturday's finale was the closest of the series. Although the Wolves held a wide margin in play, they didn't score until Connor Craig cross-checked a spinning puck flipped by Neudorf across the goal mouth—out of the air and into the net—with 9 seconds left in the first period.

Petrie tallied his second of the series taking a nice pass in flight from Jonathon Snook and stuffing a bad angle shot past the Lindsay goalkeeper.

Shortly after, defenceman Billy Saxton spotted Wall streaking past the Lindsay defence and sent him in alone on a breakaway. Wall made no mistake on his backhand deke to make it 3-0 after the second period.

The Wolves' defence, led

by Peter Palombo, Kenny Petrunic and Matt McKeown, along with King, shut down Lindsay the rest of the game to set off the victory celebration.

Head coach Graham Craig attributes the win to tough, disciplined hockey.

"When we stay out of the penalty box, we are darned hard to beat," he said.

This was the third Ontario Minor Hockey Association championship in nine years for this tight-knit group, most of whom have played together as a travel team since their days in tyke and novice with the NOTL Minor Hockey Association.

In addition to their provincial championship, the midgets had an extraordinary season in tournaments and in local league play.

The Wolves won the prestigious International Silver Stick championship in Newmarket in January, sweeping through six games undefeated against some of the best teams in North America with a combined 36-7 score.

The team also took the Huntsville and Strathroy midget tournament trophies last fall, going undefeated in five games with four tournaments.

Provincial medals for NOTL skaters

Two NOTL teens enjoyed success at the recent Trillium competition in Mississauga.

Penny Coles
Niagara Advance

Two Niagara-on-the-Lake Skating Club members had the performances of their season at the provincial championships in Mississauga recently, coming home winners.

Danielle Hunter and Kristen Dorton have done themselves, their coaches and their club proud at the Trillium STARSkate competition, Hunter winning a gold medal in the Bronze Triathlon and a bronze in senior silver singles, and Dorton with a silver in the Silver Triathlon.

Both girls say they enjoy and excel at the triathlon event, which involves three skates that get scored separately: creative skills, dance and freeskate. The combined point total gives them their finishing place.

Hunter says knowing that the competition doesn't

hinge on just one skate helps take the edge off her nerves and allows for a more relaxed performance.

"I used to be really nervous about competing," says Hunter.

"The triathlon has really helped me. It takes a bit of the pressure off each individual skate, knowing if I don't do well in one event I have room to make it up in the others."

She also loves the jumping that is part of the freeskate, a skill she has worked hard at and become good at.

Hunter and Dorton both began skating with the club at a young age, and give credit to their current success to coach Judi Boyle-Krzeczkowski, who came to the NOTL club in 1992, and has steadily been pumping out great skaters ever since.

You have to love a sport to devote as much time to it as these girls have. Hunter, now 16, says she has fun on the ice, and gets pleasure from being able to express herself.

Dorton says skating is in her blood. Her mother coaches, and her older sister also skated at the competitive level.

"I'm here seven days week. I guess it's just in me to skate," she says.

The skaters also work out

at Balance Fitness Studio with personal trainers, who encourage them to develop core strength and endurance.

"They make us work hard, but they make it fun," says Dorton.

And the hard work, both on the ice and in the gym, is paying off, says their coach, who is thrilled to have two skaters do so well at the provincial level.

"It's wicked, really exciting," says Boyle-Krzeczkowski.

"They are both hard workers, and very determined. They show good sportsmanship and have great attitudes."

And not only do they work hard at the sport themselves, they help coach younger skaters.

Not everybody understands how difficult an accomplishment their win is and the effort that goes into it, says Boyle-Krzeczkowski.

"I've worked with these kids for years, and it's great to watch them grow and succeed. It's a good feeling. You know it's something they will have for the rest of their lives."

From a coach's standpoint, she says, "you work hard all season toward the championships, and to see it all come together like this—it's pretty exciting."



Kristen Dorton and Danielle Hunter will finish the season after next week's NOTL Skating Club showcase, with provincial medals to show for their hard work and talent.

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